

Proposal for a

Master Programme in Modern International and Transnational History

Summary

An MA in international and transnational history will be established from the fall of 2017 as a 2-year-English-language programme. By focusing on the areas of international and transnational history from the mid-19th century to the recent past, the programme will offer a broad and global historical perspective on political, cultural, social, and economic processes both between and beyond nation states. It will contain a combination of core and specialized courses and include a practical “horizontal” element that will prepare students thoroughly for the writing of the final MA thesis. The programme will foster internationalization by offering students two options for a 3rd semester “field term”: they will either have internships with international institutions and enterprises outside of Norway or work on history projects including work in foreign archives. Admission to the programme will be highly selective and will aim at excellent and ambitious BA students from history and other programmes (including International Studies) both from the University of Oslo and abroad. It will contribute to further strengthening the University of Oslo’s visibility and reputation as a prime location for study and research, meeting the highest international standards.

Draft Curriculum Modern International and Transnational History:

<i>1st Semester:</i> <i>30 ECTS</i>	<i>2nd Semester</i> <i>30 ECTS</i>	<i>3rd Semester</i> <i>30 ECTS</i>	<i>4th Semester</i> <i>30 ECTS</i>
<i>Main Themes in International and Transnational History</i> <i>10 ECTS</i>	<i>Methods and Theory in International and Transnational History</i> <i>10 ECTS</i>	<i>Field Term</i> <i>25 ECTS</i>	<i>Thesis</i> <i>30 ECTS</i>
<i>Topic in International and Transnational History</i>	<i>Topic in International and Transnational History</i>		

10 ECTS	10 ECTS		
<i>Reading course ITH</i> 5 ECTS	<i>Reading course ITH</i> 5 ECTS		
<i>Research and Writing</i> <i>Training Module I</i> 5 ECTS	<i>Research and Writing</i> <i>Training Module II</i> 5 ECTS	<i>Research and Writing</i> <i>Training Module III</i> 5 ECTS	

Components

2 Core seminars - Semester 1 and 2; a combination of lecture and class room instruction

Main Themes in International and Transnational History:

The course will offer a broad introduction into major topics (e.g. imperialism, the cold war, globalization, etc) relevant for the study of international and transnational history and include an overview of some of the approaches taken by historians to study them

Methods and Theoretical Approaches in International and Transnational History:

The course will offer students an introduction in key approaches and concepts relevant for the writing of international and transnational history (global history and theories of globalization, the history of internationalism and global governance, cultural transfer and entanglement etc.)

The exam for both core courses should be a combination of oral and written elements, including a short mid-term essay.

4 Topical Courses: Semester 1 and 2; seminar-style instruction, in two different forms:

2x Thematic Courses (10 ECTS) ending with a 10-15 pages essay and dealing with a topic from the field of International and Transnational History

2x Reading Courses (5 ECTS) in which the exam will consist of a presentation/handout or a couple of smaller reading-related papers like extracts, reflection papers, reviews etc.

These courses are designed in such a way as to allow for the deepening of knowledge acquired in the core course by focusing on more specific topics. Topics will be chosen with a view to define and support the Oslo-specific profile for the programme and deal for example with humanitarianism, human rights and conflict resolution, with global economic flows and processes, with international organisations and institutions, etc. Reading Courses are intended to be intense experiences that allow for and demand the in-depth study of scholarly literature and primary sources on a more narrowly defined topic.

Research and Writing Training Module: semester 1-3:

The Research and Writing Training Module will stretch over three semesters and will consist of a series of workshops and peer-reviewed group exercises. It will help students to acquire necessary techniques in advanced bibliographical and archival research, project design, and academic writing. It will accompany and support students in all stages of the process leading towards the final thesis.

Integration of the "horizontal element" i.e. the Research and Writing Training Module with the 3rd semester Field Term

The Research and Writing Training Module (RWT) will be split in three parts over semesters 1-3 (3x 5 ECTS modules). Each of the modules comprises a series of workshops and off-classroom group work elements in between. For semesters 1 and 2 they will be spread over the whole term, in semester 3 there is a need to reconcile the RWT module with the requirements of the 25 ECTS field term (internship or history project). The guiding thought is not to lose the "horizontal" character of the RWT module which will prepare students in a fully integrated way for the final thesis over the whole duration of the programme and at the same time leave enough space for the field term. Thus the RWT module for semester 3 will be concentrated in two blocks located in the first and last two weeks of the semester. The rest of the semester will be left for up to three months of internship/history project and two weeks for report writing (=25 ECTS)

Field Term: Semester 3

Students will do either internships in international institutions, organizations or companies outside Norway or will work on a research-oriented History Project including international archival studies.

(see below “Practical part/Internationalization”)

MA-Thesis: Semester 4

(see below “The MA Thesis”)

Learning Outcomes

Graduates of the Modern International and Transnational History programme will:

Knowledge

- Possess advanced knowledge in the field of international and transnational history and a deepened awareness for the global dimension of modern historical processes
- Have acquired profound knowledge of methodological and theoretical approaches relevant for the study of international and transnational history
- Have acquired the specialized knowledge necessary to conduct, under supervision, an independent research project on a topic of the student's own choice
- Be able to analyze historical problems independently, critically, and with a heightened sense for the importance of positionality and cultural diversity in the study of modern international and transnational history

Skills

- Be able to identify, assess and use relevant primary material and scholarly literature from a diverse set of local and international sources
- Be able to analyze problems and formulate research questions independently and to choose as well as to apply adequate historiographical methods to answer them; all with a sense for the potential multiplicity of perspectives on a given subject
- Be equipped to conduct research projects based on international multi-archival research
- Be acquainted with the ethical standards and the code of conduct for academic research

- Be knowledgeable of the necessary formal requirements for the conduct of academic research
- Be able to present adequately, in English, the results of their research in written, oral or visual form in a way suited for diverse audiences

Competences

- Have acquired comprehensive competence to conduct research in diverse international academic and cultural environments
- Be enabled to take a full part in international academic conversation through articles, presentations, reviews or other media of communication
- Be prepared to apply their knowledge as well as the results of their research and render informed contributions to relevant debates both within academic environments and vis-à-vis the general public
- Be able to apply knowledge and skills in multiple international professional environments both in and outside academia
- Possess advanced knowledge of the academic environment in history as well as in neighbouring disciplines, and accordingly be acquainted with all stages of the research process and be able to use this competence to work on major research projects both independently and in cooperation with others

The MA-Thesis (30 ECTS):

The programme will include a 30 ECTS-Thesis, which will meet the international standard for similar programmes. However, other than the majority of these programmes, the UiO programme will introduce a practical feature in form of a 15 ECTS Research and Writing Training Module meant to guide students towards the writing of their thesis. The Research and Writing Training Module will stretch over semesters 1-3 and contain a series of

workshops and off-classroom group exercises. It will fulfill the dual aim of (a) fully integrating from the start the thesis as the final target point of the programme, and (b) securing in-depth preparation for a thesis based on profound empirical multi-archival research and advanced historiographical methodology.

Practical Part/Internationalization:

Students will spend the greater part of the programme's 3rd semester on a "field term" (practical semester) which will give students an opportunity to acquaint themselves with potential future job environments. The practical semester will by default be spent abroad and thus contribute significantly to meeting the goal of internationalization.

The programme will offer students **two options** for their practical term:

- (a) An **Internship** with an international institution, an embassy, NGO, company, etc. outside of Norway. Those students who could not or (for good reasons) would not want to leave Norway, could spend the term with an international organisation, company or NGO with headquarters or branch office in Norway. The exam will be an internship report and a short oral defense.
- (b) A **History project**, which contains the production of a research paper based on genuine on-spot archival research in at least two different archives, one of which has to be located outside of Norway. The exam will take the form of a c. 30 pages paper + oral defense. (The topic for the project and the topic of the thesis must differ from each other.)

For both options the department will create a **service spot** to guide students in their search for suitable internship/archival spots.

Target groups, admission rate and requirements:

An English-language programme in modern international and transnational history at UiO will aim to attract excellent applicants mainly from three different groups of students: (a) internationally oriented Norwegian students with a bachelor degree in history (b) BA graduates from UiO's Internasjonale studier (INTER) or similar programmes elsewhere in Norway, who have an interest in the historical dimension of their subject (c) foreign students, in particular exchange students, for whom both the programme and the Oslo-specific profile will be highly attractive.

Admission to the programme will be selective. It will start with an intake of 20 students a year, possibly with a perspective to slightly step up at a later stage. The aim is to attract to the programme excellent applicants from history and other disciplines who have a genuine interest in the historical dimension of their subject.

Specialization requirements for Modern International and Transnational History

- The minimum requirement for admission to Modern International and Transnational History is at least a good second class honours degree (or equivalent) within social sciences or the humanities.
- All students must have at least half a year's studies (30 ECTS) in modern history to prepare for the disciplinary challenges this programme offers.
- (The exception is students with a bachelor's degree in International Studies from the University of Oslo; these students will need the 20 ECTS in modern history that is obligatory in the bachelor degree.)
- Letter of motivation: We ask all applicants to our programme to add a Letter of motivation/Statement of purpose where you elaborate on your interest in international and transnational history, either from work or studies.

Resources:

The Department of Archaeology, Conservation and History has sufficient resources to establish a new master programme, and we are committed to allocate the necessary academic and administrative resources to the M.A. in modern international and transnational history, without reducing the quality of our existing programmes.

Potential competition and overlap with other programmes:

A new attractive international master's programme in history will raise the general awareness of UiO as a potential place of study for more international students. The establishment of this master programme in international and transnational history will first and foremost offer something new: an English-language, specialized programme focusing on modern international and transnational history with a broader view than is being offered at UiO today.

It will not affect other programmes negatively but will represent a healthy competition. There will be some overlap with the master's programme in Peace and Conflict Studies (PECOS) at The Faculty of Social Science and the master's programme in history, but no more than the overlap that already exists between these two programmes.¹ Compared to our master's programme in history, Modern International and Transnational History will be for internationally oriented students both in Norway and from abroad. The master's programme in history requires Norwegian language skills equal to Trinn 3, and is focused on a 60 ECTS master thesis. Modern International and Transnational History will thus be sufficiently differentiated from IAKH's existing history programme and will attract a broader range of students both because it is an international programme and because the admission requirements for history specialization are lower. Compared to PECOS, Modern International and Transnational History will be a history programme, and as stated in the summary it will focus on international and transnational history in a broader sense and will make use of our resources in economic, social and international history.

¹ PECOS has its own history track that offers two mandatory courses that are also a part of the master's program in history, and at least one topical course offered to students of both programmes.